

Township of North Dumfries
2018 Annual Accessibility Status Report



The TOWNSHIP of
NORTH DUMFRIES

Adopted by Council: January 21, 2019

Accessible formats are available upon request.

Background and Purpose

In December 2001, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) was passed by the provincial government to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. provincial government to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. Under the legislation, all municipalities, with a population greater than 10,000, are required to establish accessibility advisory committees. In addition, the legislation stipulates that the majority of committee members must self-identify as a person with a disability. As such, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) was established by Regional Council on August 12, 2003. This Joint Committee of the seven area municipalities (the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich and the Region of Waterloo, the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo) provides vision and direction to members of Council and staff as the participating municipalities develop plans to remove barriers and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

In June 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* was enacted into law. The Act is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the ODA and its requirements apply to the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. The Act requires the development of accessibility standards, compliance deadlines, and administrative penalties for non-compliance. Moreover, the fundamental purpose of the AODA is to ensure that Ontario is universally accessible by 2025.

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) was created as part of the AODA. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunity to participate in everyday life.

The IASR is broken down into five standards:

- General Requirements
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transit
- Design of Public Spaces

The purpose of this status report is to make the public aware of the Township of North Dumfries's progress with regards to our 2014-2019 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will provide a summary of key accomplishments made towards inclusions in 2018, and look ahead to 2019. The Township of North Dumfries's 2014-2019 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan can be found on our website (www.northdumfries.ca). Accessible formats are available upon request.

The Township of North Dumfries is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free Township for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in the Township. With this plan, the Township is proud to present its findings and report on the development of strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and the aging population.

The 2018 Annual Status Report will be made available on the Township's website at www.northdumfries.ca. It will also be provided to anyone who requests a copy, in addition to providing accessible formats upon request.

The Township of North Dumfries

As the Township of North Dumfries continues to grow, Council and staff are committed to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive community for all residents.

The Township of North Dumfries consists of primarily rural areas, in addition to a variety of small villages including Ayr, Clyde, Branchton,

Reidsville and Roseville. The population of the Township of North Dumfries is approximately 10,000. The Council of the Township of North Dumfries is governed by a Mayor and four Ward Councilors.

In order to meet the needs of the Township's growing population, now, and in the future, the Township enacted a strategic plan in 2015.

Township of North Dumfries's Vision: North Dumfries, one of southwestern Ontario's most desirable rural communities honours its culture and heritage; where citizens and leaders strive to improve the quality of life for all residents in a sustainable and secure environment.

Township of North Dumfries Mission Statement: Preserving and enhancing quality of life in North Dumfries through the exceptional delivery of Municipal services.

Organizational Structure

The Township of North Dumfries is comprised of five departments: Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, Development Services, Community Services and Fire and Emergency Services.

Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC)

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) is an advisory committee serving the Region of Waterloo and the respective Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. Staff representatives of each municipality participate in a joint recruitment process annually to fill GRAAC vacancies and each Council passes a resolution to appoint new members. GRAAC is made up of between 11 and 15 volunteers and advises the councils on accessibility issues including their annual accessibility plans.

GRAAC Members for 2018:

Sharon Giles (Co-Chair)

Greg Moore (Co-Chair)

Brenda Robinson

Donna Hartzler

Mike Shipley

Dawn Clelland

Paula Saunders

Gail Brunsdon

Jolene MacDonald

Ben Benninger

Andrew Tutty

Rob Bender

Keri Cameron

Rhonda-Marie Parke

Township of North Dumfries GRAAC staff representative:

Ashley Sage, Clerk

2958 Greenfield Road, P.O. Box 1060

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Highlights of 2018

- ❖ The Township launched a new website at the end of 2017 and throughout 2018 has continued to further enhance and improve upon accessibility initiatives available on the website. Staff have further improved the type of information made available on the website, and have continued to reviewed and enhance features to ensure AODA requirements are being met. The Township has expanded the availability of online services made available on the website including the launch of the electronic bids and tender page that allows the Township to streamline the procurement process and provide bid related documents electronically to interested parties.
- ❖ The service counters at the North Dumfries Community Complex that are utilized by our payroll and tax personnel underwent some renovations. The counters were lowered, which has improved the accessibility of these counters for the public. The service counters were constructed in accordance with AODA standards.
- ❖ Staff have reviewed and updated the Request for Proposal and Tendering process. The Township now requires all bidders to sign an AODA Compliance Form as part of their submission package to the Township. This ensures that all contractors who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the Township are trained on all the regulations and the Ontario Human Rights Code. When a bidder submits their package, they must sign a form that confirms that they are in full compliance with the AODA, that they provide AODA training and that they keep records of the training provided.
- ❖ A new play structure was built at Clyde Park and was completed in the summer of 2018. Public Works staff review annually whether there is any need to replace and update play apparatus in the various parks across the Township based upon the life cycle replacement schedule and to maintain compliance with applicable regulations and

legislation. The new play structure now meets AODA requirements and CSA standards for all play structures on municipal property.

- ❖ A number of road resurfacing projects took place. As part of these projects, staff will review and make any required adjustments to the sidewalk network and curb face at that time.
- ❖ Have completed sidewalk new construction and missing links. This included the installation of new concrete sidewalk ramps with tactile plates. All ramps and transitions meet the requirements of the AODA.
- ❖ Floor replacement on the second floor at the Ayr Community Complex. The tactile plates installed must be AODA compliant for interiors and not exceed the supplied flooring thickness.
- ❖ Winter maintenance contract for municipal sidewalks, snow plowing and sanding/salting services for roads and parking lots.
- ❖ Staff was committed to improving accessibility for the 2018 Municipal Election. The Township utilized internet and telephone voting, which staff feel had many benefits for those who had accessibility concerns. Accessibility training has been reviewed and updated. The new training was rolled out to Election Staff as part of the 2018 municipal election and will be rolled out to all staff in 2019.

Looking Ahead to 2019

The Township of North Dumfries is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. The Township recognizes the diverse needs of all our residents and customers and will respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. The Township is committed to meeting the needs of

people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements.

- ❖ Staff will start working on establishing a new multi-year accessibility plan. The current multi-year accessibility plan ends in 2019. Staff will be reviewing potential accessibility initiatives that could be incorporated into projects, reviewing the capital budget for upcoming projects, and meet and review accessibility initiatives with senior staff to establish a new multi-year accessibility plan.
- ❖ Township will be improving the lighting along the pathway in Centennial Park, downtown Ayr. New LED directional lighting will be installed along the pathway, which will greatly improve the lighting and visibility along the pathway.
- ❖ Council has approved the hiring of a consultant to complete a Facility Condition Assessment and Planning Study in 2019. This assessment will also include an accessibility audit for nine (9) Township buildings. The audit will examine the building's interior and exterior environments according to an established set of accessibility criteria. The audit will measure accessibility criteria's and will examine the overall "usability" of a building and its site according to the needs of persons with disabilities. The completion of this will assist in obtaining information relevant for updating the Township's new multi-year accessibility plan.
- ❖ Designs and possible early construction could begin for a new skatepark in Ayr. The skatepark will be state-of-the-art, and will include pedestrian and vehicular maintenance access to the proposed skate park facility from the adjacent parking lot and to the adjacent amenity areas as well as hardscape / softscape landscaping to provide the appropriate setting and transition to adjacent activity areas.

- ❖ Continue to improve and enhance the Township website where reasonable to do so. In 2019, the Township will be integrating a recreation and facility booking management software to the Township website that will allow for facility bookings and equipment rentals to be done online.
- ❖ Roll out revised AODA training for all staff. Staff will also review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.
- ❖ Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required.
- ❖ Installation of thirteen (13) barrier free door openers to provide access to washrooms, programming rooms and entry into the arena bowl in the North Dumfries Community Complex. The installation of the barrier free door openers will ensure that individuals of all abilities have the capacity to access these spaces with independence.
- ❖ Township will be embarking upon an assessment of a new Municipal Office and as part of the formulation of scenarios, barrier free design principals will be assessed to serve the needs of staff and visitors to the building.
- ❖ Newly elected Council will be updating and reviewing the Corporate Strategic Plan, which establishes the overall blueprint, vision and goals for the corporation for the term of the new Council (2018-2022).
- ❖ Continue to incorporate accessible features into Township projects when reasonable to do so.
- ❖ Continue to seek GRAAC's input on matters where required.

Conclusion

Council and staff continue to work towards creating a universally accessible community by systematically removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

Feedback on the accessibility of Township facilities, programs, and goods and services is always welcome. Please contact the Corporate Services department to provide any feedback.